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## **FTA AND CITY SIGN \$1.55 BILLION FUNDING AGREEMENT FOR HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT**

The City and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today signed a historic agreement that secures \$1.55 billion in federal funding for Honolulu's rail transit system. The elevated rail project will provide Honolulu residents and visitors with a safe, reliable and efficient transportation alternative to some of the nation's worst traffic congestion.

The agreement was signed during a ceremony in Washington D.C., with U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood; FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff; U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye's Chief of Staff Jennifer Goto Sabas and the Senator's widow, Irene Inouye; U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka; U.S. Senator-Elect Mazie Hirono; U.S. Representative Colleen Hanabusa; Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle; Honolulu City Council Chairman Ernest Y. Martin; City Council Vice Chairman Ikaika Anderson; and HART Executive Director and CEO Dan Grabauskas, in attendance.

"The Honolulu rail transit project, the first of its kind in the state, will bring new transit options to the growing region and create a modern transportation system that is built to last for future generations," said U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood. "And though, sadly, Senator Inouye cannot be here with us today, this agreement is a testament to his tireless advocacy on behalf of his state and its people."

In a joint statement, U.S. Senator Akaka, Senator-Elect Hirono, and Representative Hanabusa said:

"This full funding grant agreement for the Honolulu rail project is a living legacy for Dan Inouye. We wish Senator Inouye could have been with us for this historic signing, but this is clearly his moment. He worked tirelessly to make our Hawaii a better place to live. Securing federal funding for the rail project was a priority for him, because he knew that it will help O'ahu commuters avoid traffic and spend more time with their families. It will reduce the amount Hawaii families spend at the gas pump. It will encourage the development of communities that are healthier and more pedestrian-friendly. It will also reduce our need for imported oil. This project honors Senator Inouye's incredible legacy to our state."

“This rail system will provide relief from the punishing traffic the people endure daily,” Mayor Carlisle said. “The rail system will provide a green transportation alternative to our congested roads and highways, create thousands of much-needed jobs and fuel our local economy. It’s been 40 years coming, and we’ve waited far too long. We’ve broken ground and we’ve got the money. It’s time to get people back to work as soon as possible.”

Honolulu City Council Chairman Martin said, “This is a bittersweet time for Hawai‘i. The signing of the FFGA brings our City closer than ever to seeing the vision of rail become a reality and I am truly sorry that Senator Dan Inouye is not here to witness the event. He was convinced that our investment in a mass transit system for Oahu is a solid one and worked hard to get us to this point. I am proud to be a part of this effort, which will definitely be a part of Senator Inouye’s legacy. ”

“Securing this agreement with the U.S. government confirms that this project is on solid financial footing, and HART will continue to pursue delivery of this efficient transit system for O‘ahu on schedule and within our existing budget,” said HART Board Chairwoman Okinaga. “This tremendous milestone is the culmination of the hard work and perseverance for so many years, of so many people, foremost amongst them Senator Inouye and his staff. We could not have gotten to this point without his leadership and support, and while we honor his memory by proceeding, we deeply mourn the loss.”

The signing of the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) marks the final step of the FTA’s New Starts federal funding process for O‘ahu’s new rail system and makes \$200 million in federal funding available to the Honolulu rail project for fiscal year 2012. The full system is slated to be operational in 2019.

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